

The Irish Theosophist.

A THOUGHT ALONG THE ROAD.

They torture me also.—KRISHNA.

THE night was wet: and, as I was moving down the streets, my mind was also journeying on a way of its own, and the things which were bodily present before me were no less with me in my unseen travelling. Every now and then a transfer would take place, and some of the moving shadows in the street would begin walking about in the clear interior light. The children of the city, crouched in the doorways, or racing through the hurrying multitude and flashing lights, began their elfin play again in my heart; and that was because I had heard these tiny outcasts shouting with glee. I wondered if the glitter and shadow of such sordid things were thronged with magnificence and mystery for those who were unaware of a greater light and deeper shade which made up the romance and fascination of my own life. In imagination I narrowed myself to their ignorance, littleness, and youth, and seemed for a moment to flit amid great uncomprehended beings and a dim wonderful city of palaces.

Then another transfer took place and I was pondering anew, for a face I had seen flickering through the warm wet mist haunted me; it entered into the realm of the interpreter, and I was made aware by the pale cheeks, and by the close-shut lips of pain, and by some inward knowledge, that there the Tree of Life was beginning to grow, and I wondered why it is that it always springs up through a heart in ashes: I wondered also if that which springs up, which in itself is an immortal joy, has knowledge that its shoots are piercing through such anguish; or again, if it was the piercing of the shoots which caused the pain, and if every throb of the beautiful flame darting upward to blossom meant the perishing of some more earthly growth which had kept the heart in shadow.

Seeing too how so many thoughts spring up from such a simple thing, I questioned whether that which started the impulse had any share in the outcome, and if these musings of mine in any way affected their subject. I then began thinking about those secret ties on which I have speculated before, and in the darkness my heart grew suddenly warm and glowing, for I had chanced upon one of those shining imaginations which are the wealth of those who travel upon the hidden ways. In describing that which comes to us all at once, there is a difficulty in choosing between what is first and what is last to say: but, interpreting as best I can, I seemed to behold the onward movement of a Light, one among many Lights, all living, throbbing, now dim with perturbations, and now again clear, and all subtly woven together, outwardly in some more shadowy shining, and inwardly in a greater fire, which, though it was invisible, I knew to be the Lamp of the World. This Light which I beheld I felt to be a human soul, and these perturbations which dimmed it were its struggles and passionate longings for something, and that was for a more brilliant shining of the light within itself: it was in love with its own beauty, enraptured by its own lucidity; and I saw that as these things were more beloved they grew paler, for this light is the love which the Mighty Mother has in her heart for her children, and she means that it shall go through each one unto all, and whoever restrains it in himself is himself shut out; not that the great heart has ceased in its love for that soul, but that the soul has shut itself off from influx, for every imagination of man is the opening or the closing of a door to the divine world: now he is solitary, cut off, and, seemingly to himself, on the desert and distant verge of things: and then his thought throws open the swift portals; he hears the chant of the seraphs in his heart, and he is made luminous by the lighting of a sudden aureole. This soul which I watched seemed to have learned at last the secret love: for, in the anguish begotten by its loss, it followed the departing glory in penitence to the inmost shrine where it ceased altogether; and because it seemed utterly lost and hopeless of attainment and capriciously denied to the seeker, a profound pity arose in the soul for those who, like it were seeking, but still in hope, for they had not come to the vain end of their endeavours. I understood that such pity is the last of the precious essences which make up the elixir of immortality, and when it is poured into the cup it is ready for drinking. And so it was with this soul which grew brilliant with the passage of the eternal light through its new purity of self-oblivion, and joyful in the comprehension of the mystery of the secret love, which, though it has been declared many times by the

greatest of teachers among men, is yet never known truly unless the Mighty Mother has herself breathed it in the heart.

And now that the soul had divined this secret, the shadowy shining which was woven in bonds of union between it and its fellow-lights grew clearer; and a multitude of these strands were, so it seemed, strengthened and placed in its keeping: along these it was to send the message of the wisdom and the love which were the secret sweetness of its own being. Then a spiritual tragedy began, infinitely more pathetic than the old desolation, because it was brought about by the very nobility of the spirit. This soul, shedding its love like rays of glory, seemed itself the centre of a ring of wounding spears: it sent forth love and the arrowy response came hate-impelled: it whispered peace and was answered by the clash of rebellion: and to all this for defence it could only bare more openly its heart that a profounder love from the Mother Nature might pass through upon the rest. I knew this was what a teacher, who wrote long ago, meant when he said: "Put on the whole armour of God," which is love and endurance, for the truly divine children of the Flame are not armed otherwise: and of those protests, sent up in ignorance or rebellion against the whisper of the wisdom, I saw that some melted in the fierce and tender heat of the heart, and there came in their stead a golden response which made closer the ties, and drew these souls upward to an understanding and to share in the overshadowing nature: and this is part of the plan of the Great Alchemist, whereby the red ruby of the heart is transmuted into the tenderer light of the opal; for the beholding of love made bare acts like the flame of the furnace, and the dissolving passions, through an anguish of remorse, the lightnings of pain, and through an adoring pity, are changed into the image they contemplate and melt in the ecstasy of self-forgetful love, the spirit which lit the thorn-crowned brows, which perceived only in its last agony the retribution due to its tormentors, and cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Now although the love of the few may alleviate the hurt due to the ignorance of the mass, it is not in the power of anyone to withstand for ever this warfare; for by the perpetual wounding of the inner nature it is so wearied that the spirit must withdraw from a tabernacle grown too frail to support the increase of light within and the jarring of the demoniac nature without; and at length comes the call which means, for a while, release, and a deep rest in regions beyond the paradise of lesser souls. So, withdrawn into the Divine Darkness, vanished the Light of my dream. And now it seemed as if this wonderful weft

of souls intertwining as one being must come to naught ; and all those who through the gloom had nourished a longing for the light would stretch out hands in vain for guidance : but that I did not understand the love of the Mother, and that although few, there is no decaying of her heroic brood ; for, as the seer of old caught at the mantle of him who went up in the fiery chariot, so another took up the burden and gathered the shining strands together : and to this sequence of spiritual guides there is no ending.

Here I may say that the love of the Mother, which, acting through the burnished will of the hero, is wrought to highest uses, is in reality everywhere, and pervades with profoundest tenderness the homeliest circumstance of daily life ; and there is not lacking, even among the humblest, an understanding of the spiritual tragedy which follows upon every effort of the divine nature bowing itself down in pity to our shadowy sphere ; an understanding in which the nature of the love is gauged through the extent of the sacrifice and the pain which is overcome. I recall the instance of an old Irish peasant, who, as he lay in hospital wakeful from a grinding pain in his leg, forgot himself in making drawings, rude yet reverently done, of incidents in the life of the Galilean teacher. One of these which he showed me was a crucifixion, where, amidst much grotesque symbolism, were some tracings which indicated a purely beautiful intuition ; the heart of this crucified figure, no less than the brow, was wreathed about with thorns and radiant with light : "For that," said he, was where he really suffered." When I think of this old man, bringing forgetfulness of his own bodily pain through contemplation of the spiritual suffering of his Master, my memory of him shines with something of the transcendent light he himself perceived ; for I feel that some suffering of his own, nobly undergone, had given him understanding, and he had laid his heart in love against the Heart of Many Sorrows, seeing it wounded by unnumbered spears yet burning with undying love.

Though much may be learned by observance of the superficial life and actions of a spiritual teacher, it is only in the deeper life of meditation and imagination that it can be truly realized ; for the soul is a midnight blossom which opens its leaves in dream, and its perfect bloom is unfolded only where another sun shines in another heaven : there it feels what celestial dew descends on it, and what influences draw it up to its divine archetype : here in the shadow of earth root intercoils with root and the finer distinctions of the blossom are not perceived. If we knew also who they really are, who sometimes in silence, and sometimes with the eyes of the world at gaze, take upon

them the mantle of teacher, an unutterable awe would prevail; for underneath a bodily presence not in any sense beautiful may burn the glory of some ancient divinity; some hero who has laid aside his sceptre in the enchanted land to rescue old-time comrades fallen into oblivion: or again, if we had the insight of the simple old peasant into the nature of this enduring love, out of the exquisite and poignant emotions kindled would arise the flame of a passionate love which would endure long æons of anguish that it might shield, though but for a little, the kingly hearts who may not shield themselves.

But I too, who write, have launched the rebellious spear, or in lethargy have oftentimes gone down the great drift numbering myself among those who not being with must needs be against: therefore I make no appeal; they only may call who stand upon the lofty mountains; but I reveal the thought which arose like a star in my soul with such bright and pathetic meaning, leaving it to you who read to approve and apply it.

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AN INTERESTING LETTER.

(Concluded from p. 172.)

As to the broader scope of the work, that comes from united effort of the whole mass of units. It embraces the race, and as we cannot escape from the destiny of the race we have to dismiss doubt and continue at work. The race is, as a whole, in a transition state, and many of its units are kept back by the condition of the whole. We find the path difficult because, being of the race, the general race tendencies very strongly affect us. This we cannot do away with in a moment. It is useless to groan over it; it is also selfish, since we in the distant past had a hand in making it what it now is. The only way we can alter it is by such action now as makes of each one a centre for good, a force that makes "for righteousness," and that is guided by wisdom. From the great power of the general badness we each one have a greater fight to wage the moment we force our inner nature up beyond the dead level of the world. So before we attempt that forcing we should, on the lower plane, accumulate all that we can of merit by unselfish acts, by kind thoughts, by detaching our minds from the allurements of the world. This will not throw us out of the world, but will make us free from the great force which is called by Boehme the "Turba," by which he meant the immense power of the unconscious and material basis of our nature. That material base being devoid of

soul is more inclined on this plane to the lower things of life than to the higher.

Hence until we have in some degree conquered that it is useless for us to be wishing, as so many of us do, to see the Masters and to be with them. They could not help us unless we furnish the conditions, and a mere desire is not the needed condition. The new condition calls for a change in thought and nature.

So the Masters have said this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has thus been said. We are working for the new cycles and centuries. What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyan Chohans did in the transition point—the midway point—in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the new impulse for the new types, which resulted later in all the vast varieties of nature. In the mental development we are now at the same point; and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. Thus in other centuries we will come out again to go on with it. If we neglect it now so much the worse for us then. Hence we are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the race. That is why it may seem indefinite, but it is, nevertheless, very defined and very great in scope. Let me refer you to that part of *The Secret Doctrine*, penned by Master himself, where the midway point of evolution is explained in reference to the ungulate mammals. It should give you a glimpse of what we have to do, and remove all vain longings for a present sojourn with our unseen guides and brothers. The world is not free from superstition, and we, a part of it, must have some traces left of the same thing. They have said that a great shadow follows all innovations in the life of humanity; the wise one will not bring on that shadow too soon, and not until some light is ready to fall at the same time for breaking up the darkness.

Masters could give now all the light and knowledge needed, but there is too much darkness that would swallow up the light, except for a few bright souls, and then a greater darkness would come on. Many of us could not grasp nor understand all that might be given, and to us would result a danger and new difficulty for other lives, to be worked out in pain and sorrow. It is from kindness and love that Masters do not blind us with the electric flash of truth complete.

But concretely there is a certain object for our general work. It is to start up a new force, a new current in the world, whereby great and

long-gone Gnânis or wise ones will be attracted back to incarnate among men here and there, and thus bring back the true life and the true practices. Just now a pall of darkness is over all that no Gnâni will be attracted by. Here and there a few beams strike through this. Even in India it is dark, for there, where the truth is hid, the thick veil of theological dogma hides all, and though there is great hope in it the Masters cannot pierce through to minds below. We have to educate the west so that it may appreciate the possibilities of the east, and thus on the waiting structure in the east may be built up a new order of things for the benefit of the whole. We have, each one of us, to make of ourselves a centre of light; a picture-gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres beyond the earth. This is not spiritualism at all, for it has no reference to the denizens of the spook-land in any way.

Let us then have great faith and confidence. See how many have gone out from time to time from your centre to many and distant parts of the world, and how many will continue to go for the good and the gain of man of all places. They have gone to all parts, and it must be that even if the centre should be disrupted by causes outside of you, its power and reality will not be destroyed at all, but will ever remain even after all of it may have gone as far as bricks and mortar are concerned.

I give you my best wishes and brotherly greetings for the new year and for every year that is to come.—Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

THE FOUNDING OF EMAIN MACHA.

SO LONG is it since the great Queen Macha lived and ruled in Eiré that her name, her wars and the founding of Emain Macha, that old city we now call Armagh, are almost unknown to Eiré's people. Prophetess and seeress also, wisest of her generation, perchance in future years she will come again, to lead and rule our island race as in those ancient days.

The three chief kings of Eiré, Aedh Ruaidh, Dithorba, and the wise young Kimbaoth, son of the still wiser Fintann, met together. They were the rulers of the north, the west, and the south of Eiré, but Kimbaoth, the southern king, had sent swift messengers to Aedh and Dithorba, saying:

"Come to my dún by Loch Len, for I would speak with you of a project I have in my mind for the welfare and advancement of our subjects, whereby they may be united and desolating war avoided."

The twilight of spring had merged into the dawning of summer when, at the close of the lengthening day, two brilliant flashing hosts were discerned travelling along the mountain passes. First came the Olnemacian king, Dithorba, attended by his five sons and numerous casters of the javelin and spearmen. Their war-chariots glittered with findruiney and silver, but the warriors bore the white shields of the feast. Then came Aedh Ruaidh, with his only child, his daughter Macha of the ruddy hair, beautiful, fierce as the warlike hawk, yet gentle as the soft white fawn that played in the woods of Murthemney. Their retinue was greater than that of Dithorba, for Aedh was the conquering Ultonian king, and besides the chiefs and men of battle came also noble youths in fosterage and royal druids and jesters, poets, harpers and the players of the pipes, with many more of the household of Aedh. Lofty in stature and of noble appearance were all the people of the distant north, and the bright-haired Macha, though but a girl, was tall as the tallest warrior among them. Often the people of Ulla compared her to some clear-shining star that men loved and watched afar off, desiring to draw near to, but because of its radiant beauty daring not to approach.

Kimbaoth had prepared a great feast for his guests, partly because he wished to honour Macha, whom before he had never seen, but the fame of whose loveliness and great deeds had reached him. Macha that evening sat on the high seat on the right of the southern king, and next to her was the royal bard, while beyond him were the harpers of the king-visitors and those belonging to Kimbaoth. Among the latter was a youth, dressed in white lena and gold-embroidered green bratta, with gold bands round his otherwise bare legs. Tangled locks of red hair dropped low on his neck and fell over his forehead. His eyes had caught some of the sunlight he loved so much, and golden-brown they shone as he stood up there, gazing straightly before him as one who is in an ecstasy and perceives not the things surrounding him; but, on looking closer, a humorousness and merriment could be discerned lurking deeply in them. Art was the youth's name, and, though not the chief harper, he was the king's favourite, for his wild pranks and merry speeches, with a certain power of good-natured mimicry, made him dear to all. Yet he was a wayward youth, and his merriment alternated with strange abstractions, when he would absent himself from the dún and wander into the woods, listening to the

music that chose for its harp-strings leaves and flowers and tall swaying grasses, and watching gigantic figures sweep across the leagues of night-sky far above him. From one of these nocturnal strayings he had just returned, and silently he stood there amid the others, in his ecstasy delicately touching his harp, bringing therefrom a sweet faery music which the king delighted to hear.

The night passed on, and when the stars were at the third hour before their paling the chief bard arose with his golden harp, and he sang of the days when the gods dwelt and moved on the hills and in the valleys of Eiré. He sang, too, of the great mother of the gods—that ancient one whom men call the Mor Reega—and of the time when she should return to the world and rule, great as of long-gone years, with the rule and the heart of one truly godlike. Then the druidic fire awoke in the bard, and he became far-seeing and far-hearing. With a fiery hand he struck the chords, and lifted up his voice in a chant to the gods, for he saw that the hall of the dûn was filled with shining beings invisible to most there, and he saw also one of these shining ones, the mightiest of all, standing by Macha, inclined towards her. And as he sang these things men's voices grew hushed and silenced was their laughter; even the tall white candles burned steadily and slowly, without a flicker, as though they too were enwrapped in the secret peace that filled the vast hall. A little restless bird fluttered in out of the night and twittered for a moment as it flew down the hall, then sat quietly on a bare brown twig projecting from the tree-made side of the dûn. Still Ilvaen the bard sang on, and the magical murmur of his song filled the warriors' ears and their hearts until they too beheld those whose glory he chanted; then, as the vision of the Mor Reega flashed clear upon them, the dûn was filled and far out into the night travelled one long shout of joy that this should happen in their midst. Ilvaen ceased; the vision passed; and Kimbaoth uprose and with a silver kingly wand struck the glittering canopy above his head. He spoke, and solemnly sounded his voice down the bronze-pillared hall.

“Far-journeying kings and warriors, and you my people, who have seen this night a vision which for centuries has not been seen in Eiré: long ago it was foretold that the Mor Reega would reappear on earth, and be a ruler and leader of men, but whether the time is here I cannot say, for I am a mortal and do not understand the minds of the hidden ones of the hills. What the coming of the great queen portends I know not; but whether she comes with the shield and the cath-barr of battle, or the shimmering robe of peace, the heroes of Eiré will ever

be ready to follow her bidding, for she alone bestows high courage and warlike ardour upon those of noble heart. Now let each depart to his own quarters, for to-morrow we have many things to discuss concerning the welfare of our island."

Still with the awe of that divine presence upon them each man unhooked his shield from the wall and walked slowly and broodingly through the unclosed doors of the dún into the stillness of the night, each to his own tent or wattled house; there to dream, perchance, that in Macha they could discern the might, the beauty and the wisdom of the great queen.

The morning broke clear over the hills and woods and waters of the southern king's territory. As the sun rose high the warriors assembled outside the dún, and sweet was the musical ringing and tinkling of their shields and spears as they moved about, laughing and talking one with another; for the awe of the preceding evening had somewhat worn off in the sunlight of the morning, which had filled them with lightheartedness and joy. Then a herald came forth from the dún, and blew three blasts on the trumpet, and with the blowing of the third blast all had moved inside the dún, where the three kings sat on the high seat at the northern end. Royal was the appearance of the kings that morning, in their brattas of ever-changing colours, and though Kimbaoth was the youngest of the rulers, yet more brilliant were the hues of his bratta, more shining the golden wheel-brooch on his breast and the righ-barr encircling his noble head. Surely, O Kimbaoth, thou too wert of that race, famous in song, who fought at Moytura for freedom from the dark Fomorian tyrants!

When the murmur of voices and the sound of moving feet had ceased Kimbaoth mac Fintann arose and propounded the project which in sleep had entered and shaped itself in his mind, and this was that henceforth Aedh and Dithorba and himself should not rule separately over a divided land, but should make a compact to rule each for seven years, so that the people of the island would be united and tribal wars avoided. And he furthermore suggested that Aedh Ruaidh should reign first, for his fame as a warlike and just king was throughout the isle. But as he harangued the assembly a murmur of dissension came from some there, and when Kimbaoth ceased one of his warriors arose and said:

"It pleases us not to be subject to any king save you, O Kimbaoth son of Fintann. This thing we do not like, for if peace reigns in Eiré she will no longer have need of warriors; the battle-chariots will grow rusty and useless, the spears and shields will decay in idleness, and

we—we shall become as women, and spend our time in brooding and speaking of those days when we were indeed warriors. We do not want to become a nation of bards or druids, for far dearer to us than the singing of men is the singing of demons as they accompany us forth to the battle. Let us remain as aforetime, to battle and feast as of yore."

Loud then rang the shouts of the southern giants through the great hall, and echoed amid the massive pillars and the far-away rafters supporting the dimly-seen roof. At that shout the brows of Aedh and Dithorba and their followers darkened, and it needed only a word to set the spears flashing and the shields clanging. But round the head of Kimbaoth the righ-barr gleamed more brightly, and undisturbed was his countenance. In his clear voice he spoke again, and chid his rebellious people, and subdued the war-spirit burning in them.

"Would you then always be in arms?" he questioned. "Not thus lies the road to the gods you swear by: to immortal Angus and Man-nanán, to Lu Lamfáda and the Mor Reega. Since you elected me for Ard-Rie have I misled or ill-advised you once, and have you not trust in me now? Peace must alternate with war, and this I know, your arms will not grow rusty through unuse. Before me in the future I see a great battle, such as has not been fought in Eiré within remembrance. So make yourselves strong, and train up the youths in slinging, in spear-casting, in chariot-driving and the unfolding of the battle-scythes, that when that day comes we may not be beaten in ignominy from the plains of war. More of this future day I cannot say, nor how nor why the battle will arise, but it will surely be."

His people were silenced, for the king was a seer and knew of the things to be. So the compact was made whereby Aedh should reign his seven years, Dithorba his seven, and Kimbaoth last of all, at his own request, he being the youngest, though wisest. But when the two elder kings had reigned thrice seven years, and Kimbaoth was ruling for the third time, Aedh Ruaidh, dreaming one day in the hot sunlight where the Erne falls and breaks into rainbow-coloured spray by Bally-shannon, heard voices calling to him from the water: "Aedh, Aedh Ruaidh, we await thee, we summon thee hence." And in his dreaming he arose, and fell into the tossing waters, since then called from him the Falls of Assaroe.

LAON.

(To be continued.)

THE THREE GODS OF MAN.

Who could live, who could breathe, if the heart of Being were not Joy.

It is a shallow age, this century of ours: a bushel of words to a grain of thought, and that no such deep one, after all. How well we know how to look down on other times, and point to our own superiorities, as the living dog to the lion dead.

Hear us talk of how other men worshipped God, dissecting their souls to adorn our pages; making the ignominy of some old divinity our academic ornament. These and those savages, we say, bowed down to sticks and stones; while those others were deluded into reverencing some sacred hill, and one pitiable tribe thought there was something divine in storm and sunshine, or even in the earth's green mantle and the forest trees. And so we, who have never known an hour of honest reverence in our lives, make a mock of these dead men, who must have been low indeed were they not better than ourselves; and so we find in faded faiths, as in all things else, a confirmation for our favourite mood of smug self-gratulation. We are the people, and wisdom will die with us—it is to be hoped, at least, that that kind of wisdom will.

If we were just a little less self-satisfied, and were disposed to see a little deeper into these things, we might come to learn that there have been many faiths upon the earth, though but one Faith; and that among them all, the lowest, basest, and least honourable to our humanity is the faith we ourselves practically hold, whatever we may say of our great ideals. We talk of savages and their beliefs, and say: This and this were the errors of primitive man. What the first shining races of our kind did worship, would probably fail to find room within our narrow minds and limp imaginations at all; and even the thought of the worshipping savage often eludes us—and not always because that thought is too low.

We are always ready to take forms and outward masks for realities; to lose sight of thoughts in their expressions. Were it not so, we should have sooner seen that the one thing all of us sincerely worship, whether savage or civilized, is power; whatever outward appearance that power may take. I find it hard to believe that there were any such savages as our books of science tell us, who worshipped the weather; who really adored rain-clouds and wreaths of mist, the grey of the dawning, and the purple dome over all; they may have delighted in these things, with a sincere gaiety which would be riches

to us; but what they worshipped was not that beautiful face of things, smiling or stern, but power, the power of the world underneath it. And their practical aim in life was to keep on the sheltered side of that power; to be where broken rocks fell not, and floods broke not; but, above all, their worship was winged exultation in it all, such as we ourselves felt in those young years when we lived over again our own days of long ago.

And when, by what we call a progress, though we might well call it a fall, men came to dwell in cities, and no more in the wide, free air; when they learnt the arts of putting into other things the powers they should have kept within themselves, they still worshipped power, but no longer in the same exultant and clear-eyed way. All their arts and dwellings were so many contrivances to keep away and outwit the power of the world; they built walls between them and the sun and wind; they shut out nature, in order to discover man.

Then they began to worship their second god; and the reality of it, whatever its name, was the power of man. For the earlier stages of these worshippers the tribe or race or clan was the whole of man; all, at least, that they could get within their sympathies. And everyone outside the tribe was the enemy; something to be guarded against, as they had guarded formerly against flood and storm, falling rocks and inundations. Each man no longer lived for himself in nature, but for the tribe, the race, the whole of mankind whom he could understand and feel for; so much of universal brotherhood as his imagination could permit. And, had the world run smoothly, we should have come, along that path, to a true universal brotherhood; a happy family of man upon this earth. But things did not run smoothly, and there is little prospect that they will for some time yet. For mankind, that is to say, we ourselves, fell from that not ungracious social religion to one of individualism, where each man worships his amiable self. That god of self-complacency I will not include among the three divinities, though he has, indeed, received more genuine service and more rapt devotion than any other in these latter days, and especially in this century of ours; and I suspect that he has still a considerable lease of popularity to run.

Our own self-complacency is the true god of our lives, whether we call our pursuit commerce, or politics, or whatever it be; and the same cynical divinity is not quite unwont to wear such revered masks as science or art. There are men, in these latter days, who love truth and beauty for love of beauty and truth; there are also some who love these things for the sake of names on title-pages, and for a place in the cata-

logues of the devotees of the pure sublime. And the follower of wealth may exist, though we have not so far found great reason to believe it, who prosecutes his task from a sheer and disinterested love of the precious metals and their admired molecular structure, capacity of reflecting light, hardness, brittleness, and so on. But, on the other hand, we do know, and sincerely believe in, the seeker for wealth who lays himself out from the beginning to capture his own genuine admiration—and finds the task a harder one than he imagined. He gathers stocks and shares not for love of them; he builds him houses, not as an offering to the arts of form; he founds a family, not from sheer affection for young human animals; but indeed does all these things that he may say: I am Somewhat! I indeed am a Man!

The poets have given up the theme of love-making, in these our self-conscious days, so I may say, without fear of incurring their displeasure, that even love-making itself is not so free from that god, self-complacency, and his worship, as one might wish to believe. It is sardonic to say: but two young people, gazing into each other's eyes, see the image there, not of the beloved, but of themselves. It is so nice to feel that one is nice enough to be the chosen of so nice a person. There is wisdom in the saying that such and such a maiden has won an admirer, rather than a lover. And I do not believe that the use of the looking-glass is confined to one sex; in this, at least, the gods are good.

Well, after a while people grow weary of this, and cry themselves out of it, saying they are very miserable. They are, in many senses, still one would rather see them laugh themselves into wisdom. It would be more likely to last. Then they may come, in a happy mood, to worship the last and highest of the powers: the power of life, of the eternal.

That august divinity it was that stood behind the first of our three gods, the power of the world; and it was the joy, lying at the heart of that, that kindled delight in the rainbow's jewels, the shining feathers of the sun, as he scatters the soft clouds; it was that joy that made our life in nature glad and strong, and death even an exultant thing, with a heart of joy. And in our stiffer and more stilted city life there was a gladness too; the honour of the tribe, the service of our land, were good and pleasant things; though never, I think, full of such self-abandonment of bliss as the naked savage could draw from the cool wave breaking over him, or the keen wind around his body. These earliest days were the days of our delight.

We, who have made all things sentimental, are ever ready to sym-

pathize with the hardships of the wild, open-air dweller, the fighting patriot, the servant of his land; I think it is safer for us, the sympathizers, that these robust folk are dead, else, I suspect, they might resent our tears. We are so certain that we ourselves are miserable—and this, as I have said, with justest cause—that we cannot believe but that others were poor apologetic people too, sad while they lived, and sorry when they died.

The end comes, even of our misery, and we pass under the third and greatest of the gods—the power of the eternal. Of the passing to that new allegiance, and the new things that come to us under it, we shall speak another time.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

SPIRIT AND MATTER.

THERE is a measureless void between the visible universe and the invisible world that surrounds the manifested and material worlds, and it is from its nature a realm of coördinating forces, or the play-ground of the emanations that each system throws off and in and towards each other. This is denominated Pluto's kingdom, or the shadowy limbus of the church. It is not a negative state of being, but an active and powerful adjunct to the world of causes, as well as the world of effects. It is not to be understood until the rationale of its existence is explained. It only persists because of the necessity that exists for a realm where the balance of forces may be gradually established, and the elements of evolution in the material may become harmonized with the supreme overshadowing will that calls all life into existence, and where that which does not conform to the original design may be remanded to a further effort in the sphere from whence it came. The orderly harmony of all the spheres of activity in matter is secured through this balancing realm, and never can there be a lapse of the interchange of forces through it while the universe exists; and not until the smallest particle of matter has given up its last atom of responsiveness to the force that gave it birth, will there be an end to the orderly evolution of the material towards the spiritual force that made it possible to assume manifestation. Kama Loka and all the seven stages of progression in this intermediary plane, are the successive efforts of our Egos to eliminate the grosser parts and rise superior to the clogs that matter weaves around the divine thought. The returning individuality brings back as clear a manifestation as its inherent force has made it possible for it to represent. That it does not continue onwards and upwards and break the thread that connects it with the

material world, is because it has not assimilated all its possibilities, and cannot of itself comprehend the totality of experience which makes spirit what it is, infinitely powerful and infinitely wise.

The seeming contradiction involved in the idea that spirit manifests its experience at all, while itself is all-wise, is easily explained by the fact that matter as a possibility only exists as the opposite pole of spirit, and is its necessary antithesis; and is in a manifestation a constant progressive complement of spiritual force and will. If there ever should come a time when this material world should seem to lapse into inactivity and decay, it is only because the sum total of its experiences has reached a point where further progress is made impossible, unless physical environments are changed to accommodate it to a new impulse from the eternal fountain of energy; and because its units of consciousness have, as a mass, assumed a form that demands another environment. So, when the world's evolution is *in statu quo*, the change is more imminent than when we see the constant progress; for the day of its regeneration only awaits the advent of the new consciousness to arouse all the impending forces, and bring on the change from old and worn-out forms to new and happier conditions. The seeming harshness of the process is but illusory, for the mass of Egos that await the change are the real individualities of the present races; and the bodies that are manifested here are the distorted reflections of these Egos caught in a vortex of necessity and compelled to wait until the full rapport can be made in the new age. Suffering is the necessary parallel of the forces acting in the limbus, and the bodies of earth act only as patterns or matrices to carry the thought in form, from one point of evolution to another. If the form were lost than the purpose of experience would be nullified, and so it is preserved, with a phantasma of experiences simply to bridge the chasm of the interval of inactivity.

No speculations are of much use as to the conditions that may or will ensue in the new evolution, for the races will all disappear for a renewal under physical conditions to which the present senses cannot find a parallel either in consciousness or in imagination. The only relief from anxiety lies in the fact that, though death rules at one pole of the manifestation, there must be, by the universal law of contraries, life and progress at the other. Again, those units of force which have accumulated through the law of natural selection, the fulness of all experiences, are always urging the lower parts or personalities onwards, and developing the sphere where these Egos can respond to the new conditions. So, in one sense, the advanced souls act as karmic agents of Nemesis, while they arouse the deadened sensibilities of their

fellows; and their advent is always a signal for the wise ones to be on guard and hold fast to the realities, and not to the illusions of existence. There is no escape from the general doom, but there is a refuge to be found in the certainty of the renewal of effort as soon as the crisis has been passed.

IKO.

THE SECRET HEART.

Then from the Heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes.—THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE.

THE "Heart Doctrine" which we profess to embrace means something more than mere *feeling*, however lofty; it includes also true wisdom, real sight, spiritual perception. For the mind reflects the state of the feelings, and the mental eye can see clearly only when the heart is pure. *The Voice of the Silence* speaks of "Kundalini" as the mystic power that rises to the head and gives sight. When this power rises from the heart, that sight is clear and wisdom is attained. It is wrong to imagine that people who follow the heart doctrine sacrifice the pursuit of knowledge and devote themselves exclusively to the higher sentiments. Wisdom comes from the purification of the heart, and this wisdom includes and surpasses all mere head-learning. This is shown very clearly in the quotation above, which refers to an actual process of initiation that takes place in the one whose heart has become pure; the scales fall from his eyes. No mere figure of speech; the human organism is a real thing, and has its laws, its channels, its forces. Some day we shall have to verify this fact, but meanwhile we have to toil and suffer until we have conquered our impurities of heart. So we need not fear to lose wisdom by cultivating compassion; the two are inseparable. We do not desire the mere learning that comes from culture of the plexuses. It merely gives us faculties and endows us with gifts; it does not stir us from the prison of self, nor attune us to the collective harmony of souls. We are aware that the "Kundalini" can be made to rise from other centres than the heart, and produce clairvoyance and a host of other acquisitions. But we know that the brain is the mirror of the soul, and unless the soul is pure the sight will be obscure. Wisdom—not learning—is what we seek; and wisdom teaches us to adjust ourselves to the harmony of selves. All other knowledge merely adorns the self and swells the head.

"If thou wouldst cross the second [hall] safely, stop not the fragrance of its stupefying blossoms to inhale."

But so many of us are yet in the first hall, if even so far, that to us these stupefying blossoms seem the goal. These flowers of life are

very alluring until we discover the coiled serpents under their leaves; then do we realize that this is only the Hall of Learning, and that beyond lies the Hall of Wisdom. Purity of motive is the only safeguard; therefore we *must* begin with some real desire to help our brothers, and to rise from selfhood to the union of hearts.

There can be no mistake as to the true path for us who have *The Voice of the Silence* as a guide. It warns us against the heresies and snares that can come in our way, and resounds with the keynote of compassion. The chief obstacle is thirst for mere acquisition. He whose only motive is to acquire learning and powers will acquire delusion, and the most commonplace labour-unionist is further on the path than he; for the former works from a true motive which will one day bring him safe to the goal, while the latter is only accumulating obstacles which he will have to break down.

Let us cease to discriminate between compassion and wisdom, and recognize them as one; let us not seek the warmth of the sun in the fires of earth, nor its glorious light in the pale wan moon.

H. T. EDGE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

OUR commercial statistics inform us that only about eleven per cent. of the business ventures of America succeed. Tennyson reckons the failures of nature as fifty to one, and is probably short of the mark. The lapse, as the insurance companies call it, is always high. The theosophical enterprise is no exception to the rule. "So careful of the type she seems, so careless of the single life." The fact is we have to take care of ourselves, and we are unskilful in the work. We eat green apples of ambition, we sit on the damp grass of hesitation, and we wet our feet in the swamps of doubt. The results are vacant theosophic chairs, frequent theosophic funerals, as it were, with more or less flowers and slow music, and an extending theosophic graveyard, in which some of us have even gone so far as to indite the grave matter of our own epitaphs.

* * *

We must learn to distinguish between sentiment and brotherhood. One is an emotion; the other is a principle. Have you ever sat on the tram-car with a score of impatient fellow-travellers while two ladies make a long farewell as one rises, turns reluctantly at the door to send love to Cousin Kate, and pauses again on the steps to issue an urgent invitation to visit, ere she finally descends and permits the aggregation, as Barnum would say, to proceed? The theosophical aggregation is

very frequently delayed over matters of personal emotion, when the principle of brotherhood would dictate a hasty farewell and the convenience and advantage of others.

* * *

Writing in *Isis Unveiled* twenty years ago, H. P. B. makes the statement :

“What will, perhaps, still more astonish American readers is the fact that, in the United States, a mystical fraternity now exists, which claims an intimate relationship with one of the oldest and most powerful of Eastern Brotherhoods. It is known as the Brotherhood of Luxor, and its faithful members have the custody of very important secrets of science. Its ramifications extend widely throughout the great Republic of the West. Though this Brotherhood has been long and hard at work, the secret of its existence has been jealously guarded. . . . (II, 308.)

It has been surmised by some that the remarkable book, *Etidorhpa*, which has attracted such intense interest among students of the occult, is representative of the work of such a Brotherhood as is here referred to. Those who have read *Etidorhpa* will remember its forestalment of the discovery of argon, the Röntgen ray, etc. Three chapters, which were suppressed in the narrative as originally published, have just been printed in Cincinnati. They deal with the reality of images, reflections, and so forth, and the problems involved in the deflection of light-rays from whatever source. The argument practically amounts to this: that we have no guarantee that the sun or stars exist where we suppose them to be, as we are only judging from appearances. We may have more to learn along this line presently.

* * *

Professor Elmer Gates, of Washington, whose researches in brain-culture are famous, has invented a new hobby-horse. He is investigating the sense of smell and the cultivation of the olfactory nerves. He has, it is stated, made a collection, and has fifteen hundred different smells in his laboratory. They are in bottles, of course, or it is probable that the Professor would find it necessary to abandon the premises. The addition of a new odour to those already classified will be hailed in future like the discovery of a comet. Tattvic changes, rates of vibration, and other occult aspects of the question should commend this new fad to geosophists generally.

* * *

Did the paradox of trifles ever occur to you? That is to say, the reason we complain about trifles is because they are so important. If

you really considered a trifle to be as insignificant as you profess, you would deal with it accordingly. Trifles interfere with our self-occupation, and our egotism rebels against the interruption. Until we can deal with the trifles of life in a spirit of complete indifference, just as we strike a match or open a door, we shall be tied to the plane upon which they irritate us.

* * *

Theosophic poetry is not yet a startling success. We have one theosophic poet, to whom THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST does not feel at liberty to more pointedly refer. But of the host who lisp in numbers, even when the numbers fail to come, it can only be said that they are too numerous. Rhyme, accent, rhythm, metre, reason, are the usual constituents of poetry, but some acquaintance with contributions of this order lead to the belief that these matters have been overlooked. If ideas are weak and feeble in prose expression they grow no stronger in metrical form. If your prose expression be ineffectual, the chances are dead against your poetic soul making an impression. Yet let us not discourage the chirping bardling, only recommend him to be very careful, and to be solicitous of good counsel.

* * *

The time for work is the best time we find in our daily lives, and this best time is the whole time that embraces all our activities. The time of each person is only the waking consciousness, which must be filled up with the details of sustained effort towards a realization of all that should and would be done if one had but one purpose in view; and that to do only those things that are of necessity a part of an aspiration to help all that need assistance, and be one with all in spirit and in deed.

THE T. S. IN EUROPE (IRELAND).

13, EUSTACE STREET, DUBLIN.

THE Wednesday evening meetings are continued, and informal discussions held. "Priest or Hero?" by Æ., has been reprinted, and is being sent throughout Ireland.

We understand that it is finally decided to hold the Third Annual Convention of the T. S. in E. at Stockholm, Sweden, on August 8th and 9th, when Mrs. Tingley and Mr. Hargrove will probably be present.

ROBT. E. COATES, *Hon. Sec.*